



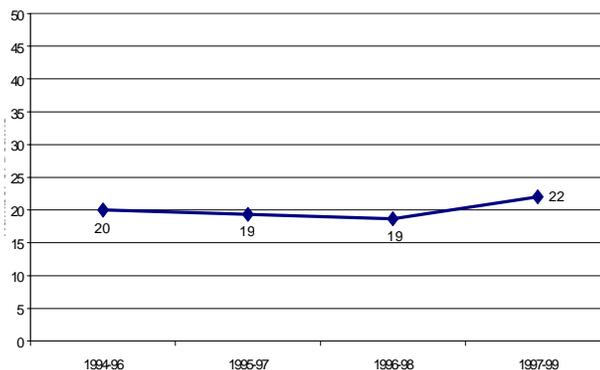
Community HealthWatch

August 2000

Focus on Substance Abuse

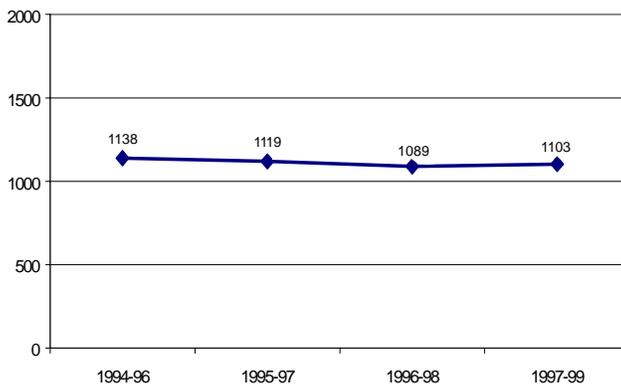
The Community HealthWatch report cards are developed by the Kent County Health Department to present health information that is being monitored by Healthy Kent 2010, a community committee dedicated to improving our county's health. The Healthy Kent Substance Abuse Implementation Team, a subcommittee of Healthy Kent, has focused on prevention and treatment of substance abuse since the initiative began in 1993. This year the Implementation Team focused their efforts on the "Drugs Don't Work" program, working with the Grand Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce to target local businesses with information about substance abuse prevention, drug-free workplace policies, and employee assistance programs.

Alcohol-Involved Crash Deaths



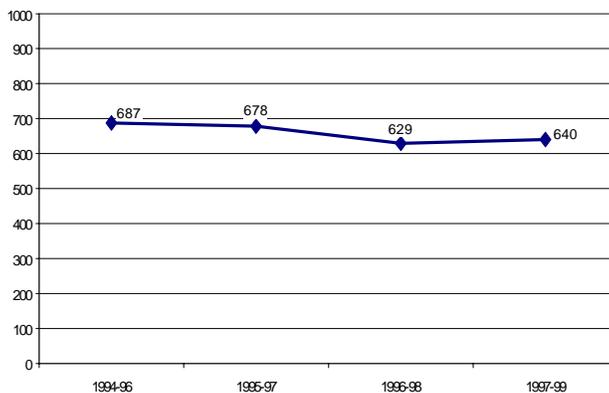
The average number of **alcohol-involved motor vehicle crash deaths** remained relatively stable through the mid-1990's in Kent County. Although there has been an overall decline in the number of alcohol-involved crashes and injured persons, recent data indicates there has been an increase in the number of deaths from alcohol-involved crashes.

Alcohol-Involved Crashes



Despite an increase in the last three years, the average number of **motor vehicle crashes involving alcohol and/or drugs** has declined overall during the last six years. Alcohol and/or other drug involvement in nonfatal crashes is often unreported, and is believed to be greater than these data indicate. For the last two years, 41% of crashes involving alcohol and/or drugs occurred within the City of Grand Rapids, with the second largest number (average of 11%) of crashes occurring in the City of Wyoming.

Alcohol-Involved Injured Persons



Alcohol-related crash injuries result in unnecessary health care costs, disabilities, and lost productivity. Despite increases in the population of Kent County, there has been a decrease in the average number of persons injured in alcohol-related crashes in the last six years. Improved vehicle safety features such as air bags and side impact beams have very likely contributed to this decrease.

Data source: Michigan State Police.